

Appl. No. 10/707,361  
Amdt. Dated September 20, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of August 4, 2006

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### REMARKS

By the above amendments, Applicant has amended claims 1, 3-6 and 14-15. Claims 1-15 remain pending in the application.

#### ***1. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(e)***

Claims 1, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Azuma (see Comparative Example 6, column 17, lines 38-45).

In response, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 14-15 in order to clarify the subject matter, and to patentably distinguish the invention. Applicant submits that the claims 1 and 14-15 are now novel and unobvious over the cited reference, as follows.

Claim 1, as amended, recites in part:

“...mixing a **noble gas** into the molten resin material ... injecting the mixture of the molten resin material and **the noble gas** into a cavity...”

Azuma does not disclose or suggest that the gas mixed in the molten methacrylate resin is a noble gas, as recited in claim 1. According to Azuma, a method for producing a light-conducting plate comprises: melt-kneading a transparent resin in a cylinder while pressurizing the cylinder by feeding a **carbonic acid gas** thereinto under a pressure of from 1 to 15 Mpa... (see column 3, lines 3-5). The term “carbonic acid gas” means a gas having a carbon dioxide content of at least 50% by weight (see column 6, lines 66-67). Azuma additionally discloses “...except that carbonic acid gas was not fed to the cylinder during the plasticization and, instead, **nitrogen gas** was fed through the resin feed opening together with

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the resin ... was applied during the plasticization..." (see column 17, lines 38-45). As such, Azuma only discloses or suggests the use of carbonic acid gas and/or nitrogen gas, and neither is a noble gas, as now required by claim 1, as amended. As such, Azuma does not disclose or suggest such gas to be one of the noble gases. Therefore, amended claim 1 is submitted to be novel and unobvious over this reference.

In addition, according to the comparative example 6 of Azuma, nitrogen gas can be used to produce a light plate and acted as a plasticizer during the plasticization. However, the noble gas set forth in claim 1, as amended, is insoluble in the molten resin material and is not a plasticizer. Therefore, such utilization of nitrogen gas in comparative example 6 of Azuma cannot necessarily imply that a noble gas also can be used for producing light guide plates.

For at least the above reasons, from the viewpoint of one of ordinary skill having common knowledge in the art, the cited references do not teach or suggest that a noble gas could be used for forming a light guide plate.

Accordingly, it would have been unobvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to employ the method recited in amended claim 1 to make a light guide plate. Applicant submits that amended claim 1 is novel, unobvious and patentable over Azuma, whether taken alone or in combination with any of the other cited references, under both 35 U.S.C. 102 and 35 U.S.C. 103.

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Amended claim 14 recites limitations similar to those recited in amended claim 1. Applicant refers to and relies on the above assertions regarding patentability of amended claim 1. For similar reasons, it is submitted that amended claim 14 is novel, unobvious and patentable over Azuma, whether taken alone or in combination with any of the other cited reference, under both 35 U.S.C. 102 and 35 U.S.C. 103.

Amended claim 15 depends from amended claim 14. Therefore, Applicant submits that amended claim 15 should also be patentable over the cited references.

## ***2. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)***

Claims 2-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Azuma generally for reasons of record as set forth in paragraph 5 of the previous action.

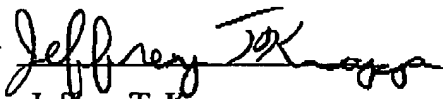
In response, Applicant has amended claims 3-6 in order to clarify the subject matter, and to patentably distinguish the invention. Claims 2, 7-13 and amended claims 3-6 depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 1. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 2-13 should also be found patentable over the cited references.

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In view of the foregoing, the present application as claimed in the pending claims is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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